DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 119 144 CS 002 453

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TITLE A Comparison of Teacher Rankings of Reading Readiness, Metropolitan Readiness Test Score Rankings, and Socioeconomic Status Rankings of First Graders.
PUB DATE 6 Feb 76
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Regional International Reading Association (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, February 6, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; Grade 1; *Reading Readiness; *Reading Readiness Tests; Reading Research; *Socioeconomic Status; *Student Evaluation; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Metropolitan Readiness Test

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was: (1) to determine to what extent teacher rankings of reading readiness compare with reading readiness test results, (2) to determine to what extent teacher rankings of reading readiness compare with pupil socioeconomic status, and (3) to determine to what extent readiness test results compare with pupil socioeconomic status. The population for the study consisted of 536 pupils in 26 classrooms in Oklahoma City. The teacher ranking of reading readiness was done during the third week of school. The reading readiness test administered was the Metropolitan Readiness Test, Form B. Pupil socioeconomic status was determined by using a scale developed by Cecil North and Paul Hatt to classify occupations. Occupations of the head of the student's family were ranked according to this scale. The results indicated that there is a significant relationship between teacher ranking of reading readiness status of pupils and a ranking of student's Metropolitan Readiness Test scores, there is a significant relationship between a ranking of readiness test scores and socioeconomic status, and there is a significant relationship between teacher rankings of readiness and pupil socioeconomic status. (MKM)

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A Comparison of Teacher Rankings of Reading Readiness, Metropolitan Readiness Test Score Rankings, and Socioeconomic Status Rankings of First Graders

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The purpose of a school is to provide opportunities for all children to learn skills necessary to function in our society. Success in reading is a skill highly valued in our culture. Without the ability to read, a person is very limited in the choices he can make throughout his life.

School is important to a learner. It is the institution responsible for developing the many cognitive skills necessary for achievement in our society. It is the setting in which the learner spends a great amount of time. During the time he is in school, most of his attitudes toward learning are developed and reinforced. During the early years in school, the learner can develop a sense of industry and good task identification if he is successful. It is, therefore, very important that this time in a child's life be productive and he be aware of his cognitive successes in school (Erikson, 1968).

A teacher's attitudes and beliefs about children will make a difference in her classroom performance. Teachers, who believe that children can learn, will try to teach them.

Presented at the Great Lakes Regional International Reading Association Meeting, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, February 6, 1976.

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Conversely, teachers who feel that certain children cannot learn will go through the motions of teaching, while not expecting much achievement from the children. The teacher's beliefs about her students can be a limiting factor in determining how well the students perform in school (ASCD, 1962).

The primary grades of school are very important grades in establishing the child's academic self-image (Erikson, 1968). The self-image developed may be one of success or one of failure. A child's success in school is mainly determined by his success in learning to read. If a student has difficulty in learning to read, he may look upon himself as a failure (Bond & Tinker, 1967).

The first grade teacher has very little concrete information on which to base her academic expectations for her pupils. One of the most important tools available to the first grade teacher is a reading readiness test. This gives the teacher a major indication of how easily she may expect the child to learn to read. The teacher's interpretation of reading readiness test results may largely influence her expectations for her pupils' success. These expectations in turn help determine the teacher's attitude towards the child. Therefore, the influence of reading readiness measures may be extensive. Hanson and Robinson (1967), and Hirst (1969) found socioeconomic status to be a factor in predicting reading achievement.

Since socioeconomic status influences reading readiness scores it may also influence how a teacher determines expectations for the children in her classroom. She is aware of the

children's backgrounds and has expectations for her children's achievement based upon her beliefs about socioeconomic status (Erikson, 1968). These beliefs about socioeconomic status and their relationship to achievement can alter her expectations for her children's level of reading achievement. The teacher has differing expectations dependent on the socioeconomic status of the child.

The classroom teacher has an opinion of the reading readiness status of the pupils in her classroom. Kernoian (1962) and Smith (1968) found that teachers were able to predict reading readiness status as accurately as do commercial instruments. However, to what degree the teacher's opinion of reading readiness status is influenced by the socioeconomic status of her pupils needs to be examined. A better understanding is needed of the expectations that teachers hold for children's failures in learning to read.

The purpose of this studywere: (a) to determine to what extent teacher rankings of reading readiness compare with reading readiness test results, (b) to determine to what extent teacher rankings of reading readiness compare with pupil socioeconomic status, and (c) to determine to what extent reading readiness test results compare with pupil socioeconomic status.

Sample and Procedures

The population for this study consisted of all the first-grade classrooms in the public schools of a northeaster Oklahoma city. There was a total of 536 pupils in 26 classrooms.

This researcher provided each classroom with a form to rank the students in each classroom as to level of reading readiness. The teacher ranking of reading readiness was done during the third week of school. On the same form, after the teachers ranked reading readiness, the school secretary recorded the occupation for the head of the family.

The Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Form B, was administered and scored by trained examiners from the Oklahoma State University Reading Center. In each testing situation only the examiner and the pupils were present. The results of the Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Form B, were individually rank ordered for each of the 26 classrooms.

Pupil socioeconomic status was determined by using a scale developed by Cecil North and Paul Hatt to classify occupations. The NORC measure of relative prestige for each occupation is a rank based on ordering the average scores derived from the weighted proportions of excellent, good, average, somewhat below average, or poor ratings for each occupation. The lowest occupation on this prestige scale is shoe shiner with a score of 33 while the highest score is 96 for United States Supreme Court Justice. Otis Dudley Duncan constructed a socioeconomic index from census information on detailed occupation characteristics. This index related the NORC to the 1950 Bureau of Census Report and allows a researcher to classify more varied occupations (Reiss & Duncan, 1961). The Otis Dudley Duncan Socioeconomic Index for Occupations

based on the NORC was used in this study because it provides a system of classification that allowed the investigator to classify all occupations of the pupils' parents.

A Spearman Rank-Order correlation was used to determine: (a) the significance of the relationship between the Metropolitan Readiness Test rankings and teacher rankings of reading readiness, (b) the significance of the relationship between the Metropolitan Readiness Test rankings and pupil socioeconomic status, and (c) the significance of the relationship between teacher rankings of reading readiness and pupil socioeconomic status.

Results

Table I reports the average Spearman Rank-Order correlation coefficient between the Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Form B, and rankings of reading readiness by the classroom teacher. An inspection of Table I indicates that the average correlation between the rankings of the Metropolitan and the teacher rankings of reading readiness was .78. This correlation is significant beyond the .01 level of confidence. Thus, there is a significant relationship between a teacher ranking of reading readiness status of pupils and a ranking of the student's Metropolitan Readiness Test scores.

Table I

TABLE I

SPEARMAN RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS OF METROPOLITAN READINESS TEST RANKINGS AND TEACHER RANKINGS OF READING READINESS

Classroom	N	r	t	p	z
A	22	0.747	5.024	0.001	0.97
B	22	0.902	9.327	0.001	1.47
C	23	0.959	15.440	0.001	1.95
D	22	0.657	3.894	0.001	0.79
E	27	0.585	3.609	0.01	0.68
F	18	0.832	5.996	0.001	1.19
G	19	0.606	3.140	0.01	0.71
H	20	0.789	5.444	0.001	1.07
I	19	0.877	7.522	0.001	1.38
J	16	0.380	1.536	0.5	0.40
K	17	0.821	5.568	0.001	1.16
L	15	0.679	3.334	0.01	0.83
M	16	0.803	5.034	0.001	1.10
N	19	0.789	5.291	0.001	1.07
O	20	0.919	9.870	0.001	1.59
P	20	0.696	4.110	0.001	0.87
Q	21	0.818	6.197	0.001	1.16
R	22	0.574	3.133	0.01	0.65
S	19	0.759	4.775	0.001	1.00
T	15	0.646	3.050	0.01	0.78
U	25	0.819	6.837	0.001	1.16
V	23	0.897	9.283	0.001	1.42
W	23	0.910	10.054	0.001	1.53
X	23	0.419	2.113	0.05	0.45
Y	24	0.781	5.857	0.001	1.05
Z	26	0.656	4.256	0.001	0.79
Total	536				27.22
				Average z =	1.05
				Average r =	.78*

*p = .001

Table II reports the average Spearman Rank-Order correlation between the Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Form B, and rankings of pupil socioeconomic status. An inspection of Table II indicates that the average correlation between the rankings of socioeconomic status was .46. This correlation is significant beyond the .01 level of confidence. Thus, there is a significant relationship between a ranking of Metropolitan scores and socioeconomic status of pupils.

Table II

Table III reports the average Spearman Rank-Order correlation between teacher rankings of reading readiness and pupil socioeconomic status. An inspection of Table III indicates that the average correlation between the rankings was .46. This correlation is significant beyond the .01 level of confidence. Thus, there is a significant relationship between teacher rankings of reading readiness and pupil socioeconomic status.

Table III

TABLE II

SPEARMAN RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
RANKED METROPOLITAN READINESS TEST SCORES
AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS RANKINGS FOR EACH CLASSROOM

Classroom	N	r	t	p	z
A	22	.578	3.166	.01	.66
B	22	.665	3.980	.001	.81
C	23	.444	2.270	.05	.47
D	22	.347	1.654	ns	.37
E	27	.537	3.181	.01	.60
F	18	.395	1.719	.50	.42
G	19	.310	1.344	.50	.32
H	20	.540	2.720	.02	.60
I	19	.332	1.450	.50	.34
J	16	.596	2.776	.01	.69
K	17	.176	0.692	.50	.18
L	15	.272	1.018	.50	.28
M	16	.384	1.555	.50	.40
N	19	.483	2.273	.05	.52
O	20	.566	2.911	.01	.65
P	20	.160	0.687	ns	.16
Q	21	.108	0.473	ns	.10
R	22	.433	2.147	.05	.46
S	19	.559	2.778	.02	.63
T	15	.540	2.311	.05	.60
U	25	.454	2.443	.05	.48
V	23	.597	3.408	.01	.69
W	23	.468	2.426	.05	.51
X	23	.399	1.993	.10	.42
Y	24	.427	2.213	.05	.46
Z	26	.150	0.782	.50	.15
Total	536				EZ = 11.97
					Average z = .46
					Average r = .43*

*p = .001

TABLE III

SPEARMAN RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
TEACHER RANKINGS OF READING READINESS
AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Classroom	N	r	t	p	z
A	22	.573	3.125	.01	.64
B	22	.472	2.393	.05	.51
C	23	.425	2.150	.05	.46
D	22	.149	0.673	ns	.15
E	27	.790	6.441	.001	1.07
F	18	.429	1.899	.10	.46
G	19	.345	1.515	.50	.37
H	20	.565	2.904	.01	.65
I	19	.170	0.710	.50	.17
J	16	.575	2.628	.02	.66
K	17	.235	3.730	.01	.24
L	15	.192	0.705	ns	.19
M	16	.117	0.440	ns	.12
N	19	.332	1.450	.50	.34
O	20	.586	3.067	.01	.68
P	20	.126	0.538	ns	.13
Q	21	.022	0.958	.50	.02
R	22	.593	3.291	.01	.68
S	19	.767	4.926	.001	1.02
T	15	.473	1.934	.10	.51
U	25	.530	2.995	.01	.59
V	23	.738	5.008	.001	.95
W	23	.44	2.244	.05	.47
X	23	.200	0.935	.50	.20
Y	24	.423	2.188	.05	.45
Z	26	.269	1.367	.50	.28
Total	536				EZ = 12.01
					Average z = .46
					Average r = .43*

*p = .001

Discussion

Results of the study indicate that teacher rankins of reading readiness correlate significantly with the Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Form B. The correlation of .78 found in this study is consistent with the findings of other studies in this area. For the sample of teachers considered in this study, it can be concluded that the teacher's rankings of reading readiness are as reliable an indicator of the students' readiness status as are the Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Form B. In short, teachers are able to evaluate reading readiness status at least as well as a commercial readiness test.

Teacher rankings of reading readiness also correlated significantly with rankings of pupil socioeconomic status. However, this correlation ($\bar{r}$ = .43) was lower than the correlation ($\bar{r}$ = .78) between teacher rankings of reading readiness and Metropolitan rankings. This may indicate that teachers rely on factors other than socioeconomic status to rate their pupil's readiness. Nonetheless, the significance of the correlation between teacher rankings of readiness and socioeconomic status indicate that the socioeconomic factor plays a role in shaping a teachers view of her pupils' readiness.

The correlation ($\bar{r}$ = .43) between pupil socioeconomic status and the Metropolitan test scores was significant. The significance of this correlation indicates that there is a relationship between a pupil's socioeconomic status and how well he/she will perform on the Metropolitan. However, it does

appear that teachers rely more on "other factors" to rate a pupil's readiness than they rely on socioeconomic status, although, they do apparently rely on socioeconomic status to some degree.

The question of just which factors a teacher uses to judge pupils reading readiness remains unanswered. To what degree teachers use socioeconomic status as an aid to judging reading readiness? or, does the teacher rely on other factors which interact with both socioeconomic status and teacher ranking? Further research is needed to answer these questions.

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